

I couldn't tell you the date my washing machine last broke down. But I remember the day I dragged a colicky baby into a [coin-operated laundromat](#)—frazzled, short on one-dollar bills, and already two steps behind the rhythm of the place.

There was a woman who seemed to rule the space. She looked like she'd lived there long enough to have earned the crown. She gave me a withering look—clearly I didn't know the [unspoken rules](#): watch the machines. Move fast. Bring coins. For Pete's sake, bring something to read.

There I sat—clueless, exhausted, and very much out of place.

One day, queen of all I survey; the next, an outsider on a cracked vinyl chair.

That's why I can write like the [outcast](#).

**Maybe [the story you're writing](#) is waiting for [the outcast to enter](#)—to bring light to a world your readers long to see into.** Our most meaningful characters often emerge from the moments when we, ourselves, were on the outside looking in.

Think back:

When did you feel like [the outsider](#) in a world you didn't understand?

**I'd love to hear your story. When did *you* feel like the outcast?**

